

HOW MUCH IS A MILLION?

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(Lothrop)

Themes: Math/Magic

Grade Level: K – 3

Running Time: 10 minutes

SUMMARY

Children love to count, but when the numbers get so big that they seem to go on to infinity, the idea of "how many?" becomes a difficult concept to grasp. Children often have trouble imagining just how big these big numbers really are! *How Much Is A Million?* offers concrete examples of what a million children, a billion goldfish, or a trillion stars might look like with the help of Marvelosissimo the Mathematical Magician and Steven Kellogg's delightful illustrations.

OBJECTIVES

- Children will gain an understanding of math.
- Children will explore the power and magnitude of large numbers.
- Children will learn to make comparisons.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Share the book *How Much Is A Million?* with children. Then ask:

- What is larger, a million, a billion, or a trillion?
- How high would a stack of one million children climb?
- How big would a goldfish bowl holding one billion fish be?
- How far would a trillion stars drawn on paper stretch?

Play "How Much Is A Million?" Begin by asking: How big do you think a box holding one million frogs would be? A tent holding one billion campers? A bucket holding one trillion marbles? As they play, remind children that a million is more than a billion, and a trillion is the most of all.

Talk with children about magicians they may have seen at circuses, fairs, or in films. Encourage children to describe the magical powers these magicians had and the feats they performed. Ask children to perform simple magic tricks they may be familiar with and, later, demonstrate to the class how the "magic" behind the tricks was done.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Play a game of "Guess How Many." Show children a blank piece of construction paper. Have children guess how many stars you can draw on the paper. Write children's guesstimates on the chalkboard. Draw as many stars as possible on the paper and have children count them with you. When finished, look at the chalkboard to see who made the most accurate guesstimate. Later, ask children: Would you be able to count more or less stars if they were drawn smaller on the paper? If they were larger? Give each child in the group a chance to draw different objects on paper and have others make guesstimates to see who comes closest to the accurate number of objects.

Ask children to imagine a stack of a million pancakes. Ask: How far do you think the pancakes would reach? How long do you think it would take to eat a million pancakes? What could you do with

a stack of one million uneaten pancakes? Have children draw pictures of the uses they might find for such a large number of pancakes. Encourage children to think creatively as they work on their drawings.

Supply children with empty paper towel rolls and aluminum foil they can use to make magic wands. Use the foil to make stars and tape them to the ends of the paper towel rolls. Later, have children use the wands to magically transform one another into a million butterflies, a billion coins, a trillion tadpoles, or whatever strikes their imagination!

Have a counting contest in the classroom. Place a large bucket of coins on one table, a bag of peanuts on another, and a bowl of beans on a third. Have children work in teams to count the items on each table. The first team to finish accurately counting the items it is assigned wins the contest. (Before children begin, encourage them to come up with strategies as to how to most effectively work as a team and use their time to count the items.)

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